

ON THE
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INSIDE

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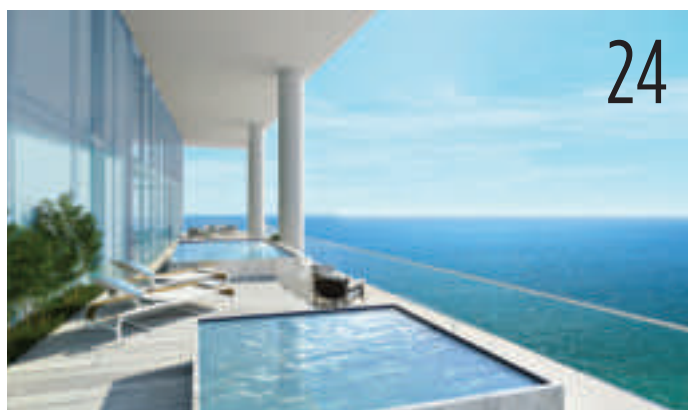
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ON THE COVER: The living room of 281 Gin Lane in Southampton features a dramatic vaulted ceiling and offers an unobstructed view of the courtyard and pool.

LAFAYETTE 148

NEW YORK





a world of luxury

In this second issue of *On the Inside* magazine, we celebrate not just high-end real estate in the Hamptons, but a lifestyle of quality—everywhere. Working with the Hamptons Top Broker Tim Davis and having strong relationships with some of the nation's top brokers in key markets, we are also your gateway to the finest homes around the world.

Case in point: our relationship with Palm Beach-based mother-and-son broker team Paulette and Dana Koch, whom you'll meet on page 10. In these pages we celebrate that tie by showcasing some of the finest new development projects in south Florida. There's also another Florida connection. We work with the people in the Art Basel in America organization to display fine art in the homes we showcase. And this magazine comes just in time for that

group's exhibition in Miami Beach, which will draw 267 galleries from around the world.

In this issue, with a little imagination, you can also ride in the elegant Bentley Mulsanne (page 20) and ski the slopes of France's glorious Chamonix (page 30). And read about the new popularity of vermouth—including a variety made with chardonnay from Long Island's North Fork (page 62).

Of course, there are also pages and pages of beautiful homes to check out. Finally, we're excited about *On the Inside's* interactive digital edition and the launch of our website, OTILuxury.com. Please visit us there, and let us hear from you on social media. We thank our advertisers and partners for their continued support, and we wish everyone the happiest holiday season!

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ON THE INSIDE

WINTER 2016

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in praise of the personal touch

TIM AND JON DAVIS KNOW THE HAMPTONS, AND THEY KNOW REAL ESTATE. BUT WHAT MAKES THEM WINNERS IS THE WAY THEY GET TO KNOW CLIENTS TOO.

Tim Davis' name is a celebrated one in Hamptons real estate. For him, that renown is not something to trade on, but a challenge to live up to daily. He sat down recently with his son and partner Jon to share thoughts with *On the Inside*:

What's your secret for relating to clients?

Tim: We never forget that this is a service business. Some brokers get to a point where they think, "I don't need to be doing this. I'm too important." I've made it clear to my assistant and to Jon that there are things we must do for clients, and we must stay on top of things.

Jon: Even with today's technology, buyers want a personal touch. It's really all about having a human connection and being yourself. I want clients to know me and know they're in good hands. Once they get to know me, I build on that.

Does technology make your job harder or easier?

Tim: Both, actually. Easier because it helps keep our name out there. But harder because we have to maintain that. Some brokers frankly don't keep up with the times. One advantage of having Jon in the business is that he's helped us stay current and innovative. And with today's technology, responsiveness and accessibility are two of the most important things to consider. How quickly do you respond? What's your availability? If you don't get right back to clients, they'll move on. These days you need to be reachable 24/7, unless you're in the middle of a jungle somewhere and have given notice about it.

Jon, what's the best sales advice you've received from your dad?

Jon: That it's not just about doing one deal; it's about building a relationship that's going to last. That's the way my father has done business his entire career.

Can you tell us about a successful sale?

Jon: In August I got a call from a young couple with one small child and another on the way. They wanted to be in a house before the end of summer. The first house they saw was beautiful, a quarter-mile from the ocean. The

price was \$2.35 million, but the sellers were prepared to do the deal at 2 mil. The wife wasn't sure—she wanted to keep looking. But my dad always says it doesn't matter if you've seen one house or 20, if the value is there, grab it. This was a big move for this couple, but the value was there. I got to know them. I had fun with them. And they trusted me. They bought the house, and now they're very happy.

What's your approach to showings?

Jon: A lot of brokers talk too much. I believe you create the mood and then let the property speak. Of course, I answer any questions.

Tim, tell us about the spec house you've built at 7 James Street in Southampton.

Tim: This was the first property I could devote my attention to that wouldn't take away from my main business, which is listing and selling properties. The land was right, but I thought the way the house faced could be improved. So I worked with an architect—Jon was part of the process too. Because he's in the business, he could see the home being built from the ground up and the decisions being made along the way to maximize space and add amenities that would make it saleable. We broke ground in August–September 2014 and finished the house in just over 12 months. We put it on the market just before Labor Day, and we've had a good response. I'm proud of the fact that there is no other broker who's doing this at my level in the community.

How is the industry changing?

Tim: The way the customer accesses information, of course, has changed dramatically. We must provide the right information to clients in hopes of gaining their trust and

creating loyalty. And sometimes it's a challenge to provide just the right amount of information—not too much, not too little. Another phenomenon that I find astonishing has developed just in the past four or five years. New homes have popped up on the market in what you might call "B" locations, but because they're new construction they draw a lot of buyers.

Jon, what makes you tick?

Jon: I really like helping people; all my friends know this about me. As for activities, I go into Manhattan occasionally and sometimes take in Knicks basketball games. Beyond that, I do a lot of the same things most people do—I work and travel. I'm active and I go to SoulCycle—it's a very hot fitness movement now. I've been cycling next to Robert Tisch, the co-owner of the New York Giants. And I've seen former NBA star Chris Mullin and actor Alec Baldwin. Besides being a good way to stay in shape, it's a great way to meet clients.

How would you sum up the challenge you face?

Jon: Buying a home is an emotional experience. A client has to feel something, especially when you're talking about something in the tens of millions of dollars. If your marketing can reach out and touch them, that's a good start. Then they must meet you and see that you're a real person and have their best interests at heart.



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WHY ARE THE MOTHER-AND-SON DUO OF PAULETTE AND DANA KOCH SO EFFECTIVE IN SOUTH FLORIDA REAL ESTATE? IT'S PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE QUALITIES THEY SHARE.



Close associates of the Davises, Paulette and Dana Koch—known as the Koch Team—bring experience, enthusiasm and professionalism to the real estate market in South Florida. They also happen to be mother and son. *On the Inside* spoke with them recently to get their take on the market, the chemistry between them and what it takes to succeed.

How has the market changed in your region?

Dana: Dramatically. The year 2008 was a peak, with the highest median price yet seen. Then the bottom fell out of the real estate and financial markets. We didn't know if we were ever going to see those levels again. Now it's 2015, and new highs are set every day. It's become a seller's market.

Paulette: Palm Beach has really evolved over the years. We're a world-class destination, and people want to be here. For one thing, Florida is a tax haven, a good place to land-bank your money.

How do you succeed in such a competitive business?

Paulette: We're solution finders. Our buyers and sellers respect our analyses. We know how to navigate on behalf of our clients.

Dana: I have an M.B.A. in finance, and that

comes in handy when we drill down into numbers. We try to give our customers the best advice we possibly can.

What's the dynamic when you work together? Are you totally alike, or do you complement each other?

Paulette: It's a combination of both. One of the great things about our partnership is that we think along the same lines. And while the office atmosphere is serious, we do like to have fun. We both see the humor in situations.

Dana: Sometimes one of us will play devil's advocate, but we almost always agree on what's best for the customer.

Speaking of the customer, what's your philosophy on customer service?

Dana: It boils down to treating people the way we'd like to be treated. We're around 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We go the extra mile for our clients. No matter what they need, when they need it, we're always there to assist them in any way we can.

Paulette: We cultivate relationships long-term, and consequently many of our clients become our friends.

What's it like working with Tim and Jon Davis?

Paulette: We know that when we deal with Tim and Jon, things are going to get done. There's definitely a comfort level between us.

Dana: We've known Tim since Corcoran got us together with the Davises in 2004 or 2005. Having personal relationships with people you trust is primary.

What are your passions and hobbies?

Paulette: My real hobby is work! (Laughs.) I'm originally from New York, and I'm still a Yankees fan and a Broadway aficionado. Also, I love people. You know the expression "six degrees of separation"? In the real estate world there are two degrees of separation. It's remarkable—wherever you are, you run into a client.

Dana: Also, we're both foodies; we love to try great restaurants around the world. And we both love to travel—I spent time in Italy this summer. And I'm a huge Miami Dolphins fan.

You both sound smooth and assured.

Has anything awkward happened to you?

Dana: Well, we've had houses that were supposed to be vacant and found, when we walked in to show them, that the owner was in the shower. That's happened more than once.

Any clients whose names we'd know?

We've sold to Michael Jordan, Yanni, Tiger Woods and Gary Player.

What keeps you motivated?

Dana: We enjoy what we're doing. When you're putting in so many hours, you have to.

Paulette: We embrace every situation with passion. And no two days are ever the same.



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seaside oasis

BEHIND A ROW OF MILE-HIGH HEDGES LIES THIS PRIVATE SANCTUARY IN SOUTHAMPTON'S SOUGHT-AFTER ESTATE SECTION.

Running roughly parallel to the ocean, Southampton's winding, estate-studded Gin Lane is arguably one of the premier streets in the Hamptons. It was first settled in the 1880s and has served as the summer hideaway for numerous prominent families and celebrities, including pop artist Roy Lichtenstein and *New York Times* publisher and owner Arthur O. Sulzberger. Purchase this



This page: Both the living room and formal dining room feature dramatic vaulted ceilings and offer unobstructed views of the courtyard and pool. Opposite: A dip in the pool, a soak in the spa, a nap in the shade—it's another perfect day on Gin Lane.



luxurious 7,000-square-foot manse and you'll be stepping into history.

Featuring an expansive open floor plan and eight ensuite bedrooms (located in separate wings for the utmost privacy), it was designed with entertaining in mind. Family, friends, friends of friends—there's room for everyone, both indoors and out. Let's start inside. The spacious living room, library, media room and spectacular kitchen all open to the courtyard terrace and 60-foot heated swimming pool—and all feature soaring vaulted ceilings. The kitchen is a cook's dream, boasting a double Viking range, substantial island and plenty of room for slicing and dicing. And since the party always spills into the kitchen, there's ample space for mingling, nibbling and imbibing. Outside, the brick-lined terrace, adjacent pool and expansive lawn area are perfect for entertaining—whether it's an intimate gathering for a few close friends or a lavish tented event for a few hundred.

Fun fact for you and your guests: Gin Lane didn't get its name from the notion that early Southampton summer residents enjoyed drinking gin on their verandas or from the tales of rumrunners smuggling liquor onto the local beaches during Prohibition. The real story isn't nearly as exciting. "Gin," it seems, was a name for "enclosure" back in the 1600s; and it's believed that a pasture at the end of South Main Street that bordered the ocean was fenced into a gin to prevent cattle from invading farm crops. Not as sexy, but still an interesting tale to tell!

281 Gin Lane, Southampton

For more information, please contact Jonathan Davis at jd@otiluxury.com or call 631.680.4742.

From top: A long gravel driveway leads to the front of the stately home. When you're done watching the game, the gorgeous grounds are just steps away through the French doors.



From top: Ideal for relaxing with family and friends, the generously sized living room boasts several conversation areas as well as easy access to the terrace and pool in the event that a quick change of venue is required. The capacious kitchen features a built-in breakfast bar for quick bites as well as space for leisurely dining. An added bonus: the beautiful backyard view.



A long, covered wooden deck with a shingled wall on the left and a view of the ocean on the right. The deck is made of dark wood planks and has a wooden ceiling. The wall on the left is covered in light-colored wooden shingles. The view on the right shows a blue ocean under a clear sky.

a world apart

ON A BREATHTAKING SITE WHERE THE BAY MEETS THE OCEAN SITS A SPECTACULAR HOME THAT IS TRULY ONE OF A KIND. ROOFTOP TENNIS, ANYONE?

You know what they say in the real estate business: It's all about location. And this newly constructed estate on prestigious Crescent Avenue takes full advantage of its unique location at the meeting point of Mecox Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. An endless wall of glass and 9,000 square feet of mahogany terraces allow for stunning water views from just about anywhere in the 13,000-square-foot, six-bedroom home. Heck, you can even enjoy the vista while playing singles or doubles on the roof, although you may miss a volley or two.

CONTINUED...



This page, from top: The abundant use of natural stone and premium hardwoods characterizes this modern manse in Water Mill. Poolside, 90 feet of brise-soleil (a.k.a. perforated screen) creates "great shaded areas" in the backyard, according to architect Philip M. Rossillo. It also acts as a "sun breaker" for the second-floor balcony and serves as a wall for the rooftop tennis court, which can double as an outdoor party space. Opposite: High-end touches like mahogany decking, stonework and stylish light fixtures make the second-floor balconies an aesthetically pleasing place for relaxing and gazing at the bay.



This page, from top: Enjoy the scenery and lush greenery as you make your way to the dock on Mecox Bay. A curved, gravel driveway leads to the estate, a contemporary take on the classic shingle-style homes in the neighborhood. Opposite, clockwise from top: The public spaces in the house were designed to blend seamlessly into one another and flow into the outdoors. The massive marble island in the kitchen area is a perfect perch for drinks and appetizers during a party. A coffered ceiling and wainscoting give the dining room an elegant, formal feel.





Although the house is certainly singular, it also fits into the neighborhood thanks to architect Philip M. Rossillo. “The houses in the area are fairly large shingle-style homes,” he says. “So I wanted to make this home context appropriate, but I also wanted it to be more modern. When you move toward the rear of the house, to the water, you get more of a contemporary experience.” That experience includes glass doors and windows lining the back wall of the home and an expansive second-floor balcony that overhangs the first floor, creating areas of shade near the pool and serving as support for the wall of the rooftop tennis court.

If you’re not in the mood for tennis, but want to otherwise flex your muscles, there’s an in-house gym. No worries, though, if you’re thinking relaxation and restoration—a spa connects to a room with a soaking tub and steam shower. Entertaining is easy too. Usher your guests to the oval-shaped movie theater that seats up to 10 people, or perhaps the

impressive game room featuring a fireplace and (of course) water views. You only need venture as far as your temperature- and humidity-controlled wine cellar for libations (300 to 500 bottles). For more fun, hit the water—the ocean, the bay or the pool. There’s a dock, so be sure to bring your boat—and your jet ski and your kayak. When it’s time to wine and dine, retire to the first-floor living space, where the kitchen, dining area and living room blend seamlessly into one another. No hallways here, and no obstructions to the panoramic views. It doesn’t get much better than this.

100 Crescent Avenue, Water Mill: \$17,900,000

For more information, please contact Jonathan Davis at jd@otiluxury.com or call 631.680.4742.

luxury, meet power

BENEATH THE ELEGANT EXTERIOR OF BENTLEY'S MULSANNE BEATS THE HEART OF A WORLD-CLASS RACE CAR.

BY LUCA SUMBERAC

Beauty. Class. Poise. Think of Bentley Motors, and those are some of the words that come to mind. However, what most people don't realize is that the automotive institution also has deep roots in speed, power and racing. Enter the Bentley Mulsanne, a luxurious limousine-like sedan with raw power that harks back to Bentley's rich history of automotive excellence. It's no coincidence that the vehicle derives its name from the renowned straightaway on the legendary Circuit de La Sarthe, home to one of the most iconic races in auto sports—24

Hours of Le Mans. A race, by the way, that Bentley has won six times. Even more impressive? Bentley ranks fifth in the total number of Le Mans wins, placing behind Jaguar, Audi, Ferrari and Porsche.

Let's be clear. The Mulsanne is not a supercar; it's not even a sports car. It's something more. It melds the best of luxury, comfort and performance cues and wraps them up in one of the classiest bows on the market. Spy the Mulsanne (consider yourself lucky if you do) and you're instantly struck



Rarely if ever in automotive history has such an agile dynamo also offered such regal comfort.



by its contours—the elegant yet powerful lines emanate regalness. And like the most stately of kings, it commands attention. After all, it's big—Henry VIII big. At just over 18 feet long and almost 6,000 pounds, it's the type of car you'd imagine seeing on Rodeo Drive shepherding sheiks, earls, viscounts and baronesses on extravagant shopping trips, or chauffeuring Hollywood royalty during a weekend getaway in Monaco. And herein lies its genius: It's also easy to imagine the Mulsanne screaming down the Autobahn at speeds well over 100 mph.

The exterior features the unmistakable Bentley headlights, a beautiful polished stainless steel grille and unique 20" alloy wheels (21" alloys available as an upgrade). Want to ensure your Mulsanne's uniqueness? How about some customization? Spring for the exterior accoutrements available with the Mulliner

This page: The Mulsanne brings unmistakable grandeur to the road, with zesty performance that belies its aristocratic luxury. Its handcrafted interior reflects meticulous craftsmanship—in one option, Apple iPad workstations with Internet access are integrated into retractable "picnic tables" in the rear cabin. Opposite, from top: an optional classic "flying B" hood ornament, a 6.75-litre twin-turbocharged V8 engine and a wheel crafted from a single piece of aluminum.

Driving Specification option, which adds "Flying B" wing vents and the iconic "Flying B" radiator mascot. Still not enough? With more than 100 exterior paint colors, 24 interior hide

colors or a bespoke option in which you'll work with Bentley to create a custom color scheme, there are plenty of combinations that will make your Mulsanne like no other—crucial if you plan on pulling up to a swanky gala.

So what powers this three-ton piece of art? Credit goes to a 6.75-liter, twin-turbo V8 that produces 505 bhp and 752 lb. ft of torque. All that power means the Mulsanne is capable of going from 0 to 60 in 5.1 seconds and can reach a top speed of 184 mph! Those are impressive numbers for a car that weighs more than a Chevy Suburban.

And inside? Whether you'll be enjoying the Mulsanne in the driver's seat,

riding shotgun or taking up the rear, you'll be greeted by an interior second to none. For starters, it's dripping in leather—16 cowhides, to be precise, carefully curated to avoid any defects. Complementing the leather is one continuous veneer that wraps around the entire interior. Take your pick of Burr Walnut, Dark Stained Burr Walnut or Piano Black. If those options don't catch your eye, you'll be able to choose from eight other veneers. There are plenty of amenities on board—12v sockets, 14 speakers standard (audiophiles may want to upgrade to the 20-speaker Naim system) and programmable settings to adjust for different drivers. Oh, and let's not forget the option of adding a frosted-glass bottle cooler with accompanying champagne flutes (ideal for those who prefer to be chauffeured)!

At the end of the day, the Mulsanne won't break any track records, it doesn't get great gas mileage (11 mpg city/18 mpg highway) and its poster might not adorn the walls of 12-year-old car lovers. But none of that matters. It doesn't need blistering speed. It doesn't need exotic looks. It's built for enjoyment of a higher class. The Mulsanne stands out without even trying—and that's what makes this car so special.

THE MULSANNE AT A GLANCE

BASE PRICE

\$306,425

WEIGHT

5,919 lbs.

DIMENSIONS

length 18 feet, 3 inches,
wheelbase 10 feet, 8 inches

DRIVE

rear-wheel

ENGINE

6.75-litre twin-turbocharged V8 with cam
phasing and variable displacement

GEARBOX

8-speed automatic

SUSPENSION

Air springs with continuous
damping control;
four driver-selectable settings

OUTPUT

505 bhp @ 4200 rpm, 752 lb.-ft.
torque @ 1750 rpm

TOP SPEED

184 mph

0 TO 60 MPH

in 5.1 seconds

WEIGHT-TO-POWER RATIO

11.8 lbs./HP

CLOSEST COMPETITOR

Rolls Royce Ghost Series II





looking up

A 54-STORY TOWER IS RISING ON THE BEACH IN SUNNY ISLES, FLORIDA, TAKING UPSCALE HIGH-RISE LIVING TO NEW HEIGHTS.

The clock is ticking. Turnberry Ocean Club is set to make its grand debut in 2018, bringing innovative design, unprecedented amenities and personalized service to Sunny Isles, Florida. This exclusive condominium development is the creation of Turnberry Associates, which has perfected the private residential club lifestyle in South Florida.

Internationally renowned architects Carlos Zapata and Robert Swedroe are the designers of the project, which will comprise 154 three-, four-, five- and six-bedroom units starting at \$4 million. Each residence

features imported Italian cabinetry, stone countertops, marble finishes, Gaggenau appliances, balconies with both ocean and bay views, and outdoor living spaces. Not in the mood to mess up the gourmet kitchen? No worries. Your staff can use the “summer kitchen” with barbecue grill on the oceanfront terrace. (Each unit also includes staff quarters with full bath.)

Amenities in the tower are unprecedented. Let’s start our tour in the state-of-the-art Sky Club perched on the 30th floor. At this \$100 million “amenity deck” you can swim laps in your choice of two infinity



in one of the hydrotherapy spas to soothe your sore muscles. Need more “me” time? Book a massage, lounge in one of the cabanas or indulge in a beverage at the pool bar. Getting ready for a night on the town? Schedule an appointment at the blow-dry and nail salon. Fido feeling neglected? Visit the outdoor pet retreat and dog walk area on the 32nd floor.

Other exclusive amenities in the tower: underground storage for your Harley, electric car-charging stations, an oceanview infinity pool, a pool bar and restaurant, a coffee bar and reading lounge, an indoor theater with seating for 18 people, a multipurpose playroom for the kids, and 24/7 valet and security service. And in case you run out of room for visiting family or friends, there are two fully furnished guest suites on site.

Space definitely will not be an issue should you decide to purchase one of the two 19,160-square-foot penthouses. These \$35 million, unsurpassed residences boast six bedrooms, nine-and-a-half bathrooms, formal and informal dining rooms, a wine room, a master bedroom gym, a rooftop swimming pool, a hydrotherapy spa, wrap-around balconies and the ultimate in luxury—a private in-home glass elevator leading to the rooftop. (Another option: the “Collection” duplex residences, which range from 6,695 to 10,645 square feet.)

No matter which unit you choose, you’ll receive a complimentary one-year membership to the celebrated Turnberry Isle Resort & Country Club, where you can enjoy golf, tennis, a racquet club, a private beach club, incredible dining options and much more. And the best part—you can begin enjoying the benefits of your membership as soon as you purchase a residence. No need to wait until completion in 2018!

For more information, please contact Jonathan Davis at jd@otiluxury.com or call 631.680.4742.



This page, from top: It’s hard to avoid views of the Atlantic at Turnberry Ocean Club. Imagine waking up to and working out with this spectacular vista. At the luxurious spa, you just might fall asleep in one of the lounge chairs while waiting for your treatment. Previous page: The good life: enjoying a dip (clothing optional) on your private balcony overlooking the ocean.





Left: Soaring ceilings and a wall of glass make the expansive living area appear even more grand. Below: Penthouse residents enjoy this stunning view, along with a private rooftop infinity pool, summer kitchen and party room with full kitchen. Let the entertaining begin!





luxury living

IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOWN—AN INTIMATE COLLECTION OF RESIDENCES COMBINING URBAN SOPHISTICATION WITH AN EXQUISITE OCEANFRONT LOCATION IN MIAMI'S SOUTH BEACH. GET TO KNOW 321 OCEAN.

A beachfront infinity pool. Lush private gardens. A state-of-the-art fitness center overlooking the ocean. These are just a few of the amenities available to residents of 321 Ocean, a new ultra-luxe development in Miami Beach's coveted South of Fifth neighborhood. Artfully conceptualized by renowned Mexican architect Enrique Norten, the boutique building is comprised of 21 magnificent residences, only one of which remains for sale—a two-story, 4,400-square-foot Beach Villa.

The contemporary home features four bedrooms, a den, a media room and a sleek, open, Poggenpohl kitchen outfitted with Miele and Sub-Zero appliances, stone countertops, a wine cooler and a built-in

espresso system. The master bathroom is equally impressive: imported marble, an oversized shower with floor-to-ceiling glass, a soaking tub and a private water closet. (There are 4.5 additional bathrooms.)

On site, options for occupying yourself abound. Relax by the pool, stroll through the gardens, curl up with a good book in the library. And, of course, the excitement and nightlife of South Beach is at your doorstep.

For an exclusive preview, please contact Jonathan Davis at jd@otiluxury.com or call 631.680.4742.



This page, from top: Floor-to-ceiling glass allows for unobstructed views of the Atlantic when you're relaxing inside or enjoying the breeze on the terrace. Although the beach is steps away, there will be times no doubt when a dip in the heated infinity pool better suits your mood. Midnight swim, perhaps? Opposite: The 10-foot-deep terrace is ideal for stretching out and admiring the view as well as entertaining guests.



crystal blue persuasion

IN CHAMONIX YOU'LL FIND MOGUL SLOPES, GLACIER SKIING, POWDER FIELDS AND SOME OF THE MOST RAREFIED CREATURE COMFORTS IN FRANCE. BY EVERETT POTTER

Mountains are the *raison d'être* of Chamonix. The first adventurer to schuss down the slopes at this Alpine spot in southeastern France did so in 1893, and by 1907 skiing had become so popular here that one of the world's first cable cars—Les Glaciers—was built to take skiers up to Mont Blanc. In 1924 Chamonix was the site of the first Olympic Winter Games.

Today it is the biggest and arguably the best ski area in Europe, attracting a testosterone-fueled crowd of expert skiers, ice climbers and daredevils of all stripes, eager to leave their mark on some of Europe's most challenging mountains.

Drive along the steep-sided, 10-mile-long valley that is home to Chamonix and you'll discover five designated ski areas (Brévent, Flégère, Argentière, Les Houches and Le Tour) as well as lift access to some of the most daunting—OK, terrifying—ski runs in the world.

When the snow is thick and heavy at Brévent, for example, daring speedsters can combine the Charles Bozon run with the Nants run to achieve roughly 4,900 feet of vertical descent. And if it's a steep grade you crave, the upper section of the Lanchenal piste at Flégère (linked by cable-car service to Brévent since 1997) will set your heart aflutter. Not quite so sanguine? The Brévent free-style area is equipped with five rails and is supervised by trained instructors from 1 p.m. onward, and beginners will find friendly slopes at Les Planards and La Vormaïne.

If there's one overriding reason skiers make the pilgrimage to Chamonix, it is the chance to ski the Vallée Blanche. This "white

valley" is a 13-mile-long undulating glacial run off from the flanks of the fabled Mont Blanc (Europe's highest peak at 15,782 feet) and is considered one of world's epic ski experiences.

You reach the start of Vallée Blanche by riding a vintage cable car to the top of the mountain called Aiguille du Midi, which tops out at 12,605 feet. (Take some time to enjoy the spectacular views of the Swiss, French and Italian Alps. On a clear day you can see the Matterhorn, Monta Rosa and the Grand Combin.) Now you're at the start of the longest lift-accessed glacier skiing in the world. While the skiing isn't terribly challenging, the route is—that's why you need to hire a guide. This is glacier skiing, and glaciers are minefields of hidden cracks, fissures and crevasses that could cause injury or worse. The local guides know the best way down, and the best way down changes daily because the glacier is constantly moving. That frisson of danger makes the jaw-dropping views even more exhilarating.

This is serious ski turf, *sans doute*. But the pleasures aren't all white. For every death-defying twentysomething attempting to ski a narrow chute, there are plenty of mere mortals rejoicing with a glass of something bubbly in their Jacuzzi while gazing out the window and making their minds a Blanc.

After you've hit the slopes—or the Jacuzzi—head into the picturesque 19th-century town to explore the old-time shops, pensions and cobblestone alleys redolent of Belle Epoque France. Maybe it's not your top-of-mind shopping mecca, but Chamonix boasts a diverse range of stores—from upscale boutiques like

Since 1893, thrill seekers have been coming to Chamonix, which boasts some 90 miles of runs divided among five ski areas scattered across the valley.



Chanel to chocolatiers and bookshops to sports stores where you can pick up some of the best mountain brands. A word of warning: Most shops close between noon and 2 or 3 p.m.—a good time to settle in for a traditional Savoyarde mountain lunch at La Caleche, where you can sample local dishes such as crispy Savoy hot cheese with local ham and wild boar terrine with mushrooms and foie gras. Wind down the afternoon with an hour or so in the Musée Alpin, housed in the former Chamonix-Palace, to immerse yourself in the local Alpine culture.

When the day's adventure is over, you can tell tales and rub shoulders with an international crop of skiers at Chambre Neuf, the town's legendary club. And for your Chamonix home base, you can't beat the splendid Hameau Albert 1er. This historic property was originally built by the Carrier family as a railway hotel in 1903. The family still owns and runs it, but now it's a Relais & Châteaux five-star hotel boasting a Michelin two-star restaurant. Hameau Albert 1er still has the look of a staid classic mountain refuge, however, at least from the exterior.

In 1996, the Carriers scoured the countryside of France's Savoie region to buy old barns and artifacts to create, on the property, La Ferme du Hameau Albert 1er, which houses 12 chalet-style rooms with fireplaces, Jacuzzis and views of Mont Blanc. The interior manages to blend modern design with the antique structure and, somehow, it works beautifully. A refurbishment of the main building's 21 rooms created a complementary cool, minimalist, contemporary design.

To relax your muscles after a run down the Vallée Blanche, there is an indoor/outdoor swimming pool and an outdoor Jacuzzi made for gazing up at the mountains. If total rejuvenation is called for, then book a massage or body wrap at Spa Le Bachal before moving on to dinner.

Chef Pierre Maillet's two-star Restaurant Albert 1er offers two-, three- and nine-course tasting menus, the last covering three regions: Piedmont, Comtés de Nice and Savoie. You might dine on *foie gras de canard* with sautéed rhubarb and gingerbread, and move on to veal sweetbread sautéed in Mont Blanc beer with chanterelle mushrooms and garden herbs before finishing with a warm green Chartreuse soufflé. Finding something to drink with this feast should not be an issue, since the wine cellar has more than 20,000 bottles and has won a *Wine Spectator* "Best of" Award of Excellence.

For slightly more casual fare, there's La Maison Carrier, modeled after a traditional Savoyarde farmhouse and serving Chef Stéphane Gassot's take on classic mountain dishes.

Nightlife? Chamonix abounds in it—from a campy, American-style 10-pin bowling alley to a Euro casino filled with roulette and blackjack tables. Sometimes, however, a quiet drink accompanied by some live jazz at the hotel's QuartzBar might be all the excitement you need after a day on the adrenalized slopes of Chamonix and a gastronomic adventure at Restaurant Albert 1er.

CHAMONIX

GETTING THERE

Chamonix is about a one-hour drive from Geneva International Airport.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on Chamonix, visit France Guide.

<http://us.franceguide.com/>

Hameau Albert 1er

38 route du Bouchet,

74400 Chamonix, France

<http://www.hameaualbert.fr/en>

Clockwise from top left: snowshoeing amid the heavy silence of the winter forest is a great way to get off the beaten path and away from the crowded slopes; discover picture postcard churches and chapels dating back hundreds of years in the Chamonix Valley; ice climbing enthusiasts will find more than 10 spots in the area to use their crampons and axes.

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which are as worthy of protection
as any other right.”

- Abraham Lincoln,
speech to Congress, December 3, 1861

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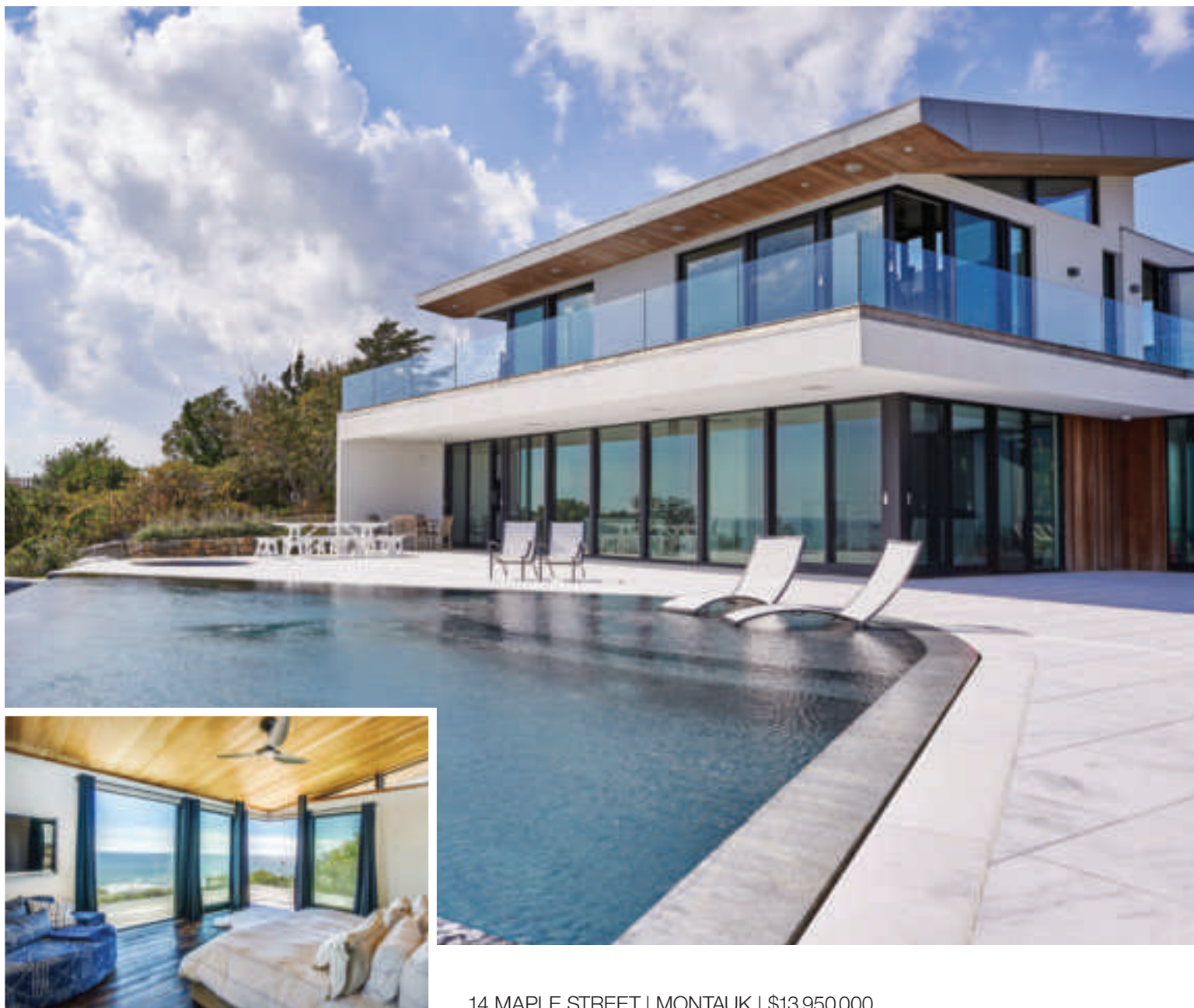


510 OLD TOWN ROAD | SOUTHAMPTON | \$12,900,000

Just steps to Gin Lane and ocean beaches, this 7-bedroom, 7.5-bath traditional home with a contemporary “beachy” interior offers wonderful space for relaxation and entertaining. Some of the extras include a library, great room with fireplace, sunroom and media room. Outdoor features include an alfresco dining terrace, great lawn and a very private 2-acre setting with high hedges. The heated Gunite pool and full-size Har-Tru tennis court make this an ideal year-round retreat.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

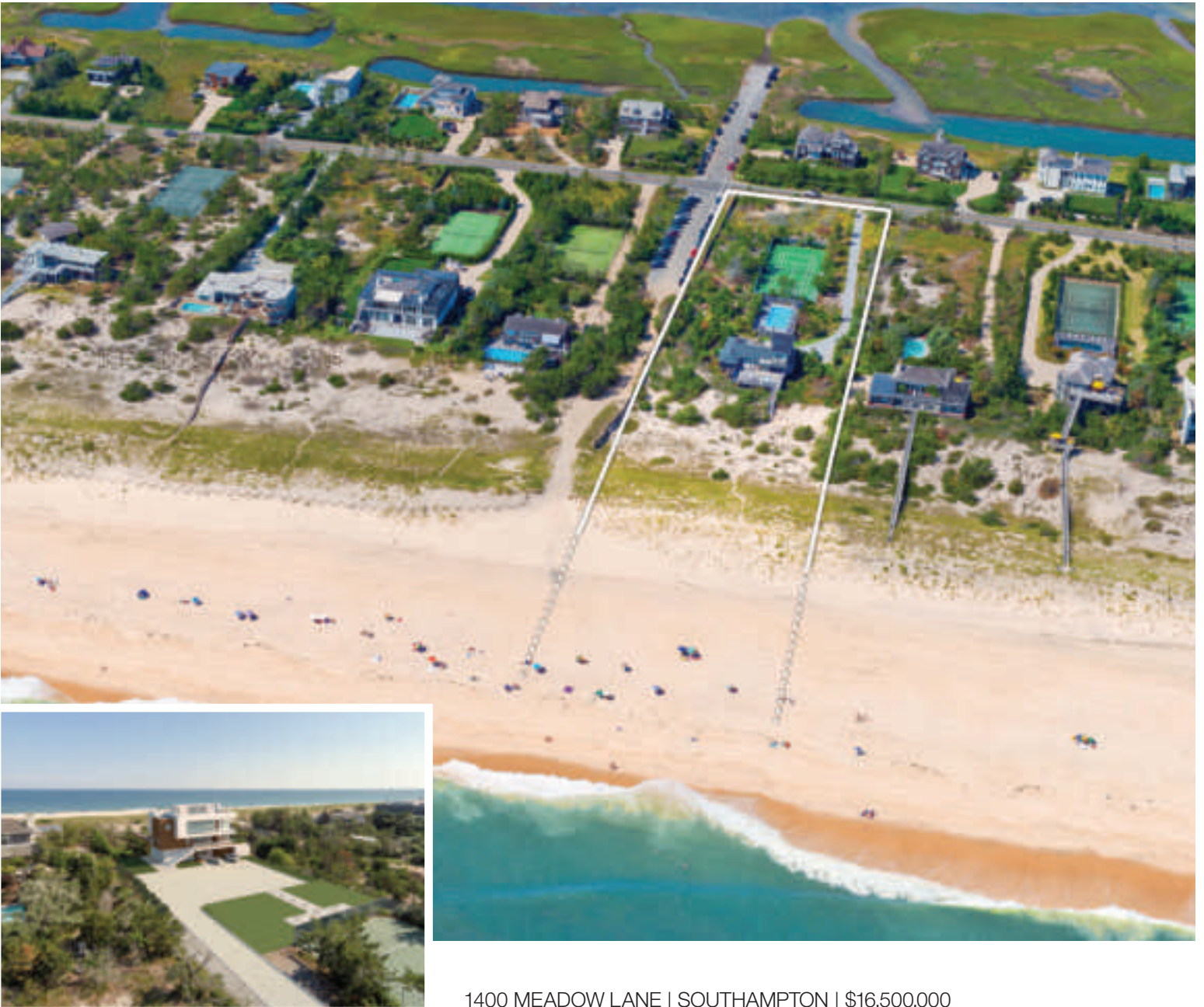
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14 MAPLE STREET | MONTAUK | \$13,950,000

This superb, recently completed home along famed Old Montauk Highway in Montauk offers one of the most magnificent 180-degree ocean views the Hamptons has to offer, with easy access to miles of white sand beaches. Situated on almost a full acre, this chic, modern manse boasts more than 7,300 square feet of living space. There are 5 ensuite bedrooms, each with an ocean view; an oversized bunk room; 2 powder rooms; 2 interior gas fireplaces (one is dual sided); 3 “knock your socks off” living areas, all opening to the terrace pool and views; and finally the amazing Siberian oak floors throughout. Custom features also include 2 full bars, 4-inch Carrara marble countertops, a 150-bottle wine cellar and a 500-square-foot gym. The “chef’s dream” Arclinea custom kitchen is perfectly appointed for hosting large dinner parties. But who wants to spend too much time at the dinner table when the outdoor entertaining space is where you’re going to have the most fun. Complete with a 45-foot saltwater Gunite infinity pool and a hot tub for 8 people, it is the best! On those chilly nights head upstairs to your private rooftop deck with custom firepit and enjoy the stunning ocean views and sunsets.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.



1400 MEADOW LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$16,500,000

Come take advantage of the exceptional opportunity to own this 2.7-acre parcel and build this contemporary home on world-famous Meadow Lane with sensational ocean views and beautiful sunsets over Shinnecock Bay. Be one of the lucky few to own a slice of Southampton ocean-front; its beaches are among the best in the world! This 4,200-square-foot home could be built with 5 bedrooms, 4 baths, an open living area and a separate dining area. There is a large oceanfront deck planned with an oceanfront swimming pool and plenty of room for lounging, entertaining and enjoying lazy summer evenings. A pre-existing, all-weather tennis court is currently in place and makes this a true beach experience with tremendous potential for future development.

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SQUABBLE LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$36,500,000

Located within the exclusive Murray-McDonnell compound, this Francis Fleetwood-designed shingle-style home is listed for sale for the first time. Featuring nearly 5 acres of dunescape and 500 feet of white sand beachfront, the home enjoys panoramic water views including private frontage on Wickapogue Pond, affording the ultimate in privacy. Nearly 7,000 square feet of living space includes principle rooms of great proportion, all of which open onto seaside terraces and offer ocean, dune and pond views. A first-floor master suite is ideal, as is the elevator, 4 guest suites and staff rooms. Additional amenities include a 6-car garage, in-ground pool with ocean and pond views, a sunken tennis court and sensational sunsets. It's an exceptional offering.

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3 PONDS FARM | SOUTHAMPTON | \$50,000,000

A rare opportunity to own this iconic property is yours today. Featuring more than 60 acres of rolling terrain with frontage on three freshwater kettle ponds stocked with bass, this luxurious residence seeks a trophy property buyer. Pedigreed professionals, all top in their field, were commissioned, and no expense was spared in the construction and creation of this extraordinary estate compound. Upon entering the 60-acre site through security gates, one takes in the views of the Rees Jones (U.S.G.A.) rated 18-hole private golf course. The vistas are stunning as you drive to the main house, with pond, field and golf green scenes opening up before your eyes. Once you have arrived, the grand elegance unfolds with layers of landscaping and lavish amenities too numerous to mention. This is an extraordinary opportunity for the discerning customer to enjoy one of the most important residences on the East End of Long Island.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

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127 MAIN STREET | EAST HAMPTON | PRICE UPON REQUEST

This great stone house on 5.5 park-like acres sits on a tree-lined village street set back behind a high hedge and important landscaping. It was originally designed by the architectural firm Wyeth and King and built in the late 1930s for one of East Hampton's most prominent residents, Robert Lion Gardiner. This wonderful residence and surrounding property have been meticulously refitted and restored during a five-year renovation and restoration. Exceptional details and superb elements make this a livable home in a sensational location within walking distance to the village center and the Atlantic Ocean. A new sunken tennis court has just been installed, and additional outbuildings are planned. It's a very special offering.

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623 HALSEY LANE | BRIDGEHAMPTON | \$7,995,000

Situated on a full acre in one of the most pristine locations in Bridgehampton, this 9,000-square-foot traditional beauty with modern interior elements offers high-quality finishes and deluxe comforts. The first floor boasts a well-thought-out floor plan, starting with the double-height formal living room with wood-burning fireplace. Adjacent is the comfy media room leading into the first-floor junior master bedroom. What's not to love about the gourmet chef's kitchen and dining room that will be more than capable of seating all of your dinner guests comfortably. Upstairs there are 3 guest bedrooms and 2 full baths accompanied by an expansive master suite with steam shower and soaking tub. A completely finished lower level featuring a movie theater and a game room is a perfect getaway for those rainy days. When the sun is out you can really utilize the amazing grounds. Enjoy the gorgeous swimming pool, relax with a good book or grill up some burgers with friends. This house was made to entertain in all four seasons.

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60 HERRICK ROAD | SOUTHAMPTON | \$8,750,000

Located off South Main Street is this beautifully designed custom home. Offering 6,500 square feet of luxury living on three levels, the ideal layout includes 7 principle bedrooms, a gym, a media room and 9.5 baths. There are 6 fireplaces, beautiful moldings and wonderful details throughout. The lower level offers surprises such as a large playroom with fireplace and access to the lower spa. Outdoors you will find the pool house with full bath, in-ground pool and spa, detached 2-car garage with full basement and outdoor shower. The established plantings and trees, including an 18-foot arborvitae perimeter hedge, allow for extreme privacy. Just listed.

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45 CAPTAINS NECK LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$5,995,000

Situated in a prominent Southampton Village location on Captains Neck Lane, this stately traditional home is the perfect way to live in the Hamptons for all four seasons. It's just a bike ride away from Main Street and the best ocean beaches in the world and is sited on a generously landscaped half acre. In its 6,000-plus square feet of quality living space you will find 6 bedrooms and 6.5 baths plus a beautifully finished lower level that offers plenty of additional space to entertain guests. The theater, bar and gym top off the interior highlights, while the garage, in-ground pool and large terrace complete the exterior picture. It's a perfect retreat for family and friends. Offered exclusively.

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78 PANTIGO ROAD | EAST HAMPTON | \$4,825,000

Hidden from view down a long privet-lined driveway, this cedar-shingled traditional residence was built by Larry Kane and has graced the cover of *House Beautiful* magazine. Designer decorated, this is a stunning home with all the amenities, including privacy in the village of East Hampton. The great room with coffered ceilings and a wood-burning fireplace shares space with a formal dining arrangement. The back wall is a line of French doors leading outside to the expansive lawn and 20' X 40' heated Gunite pool. The first floor also features a powder room and mud room, pantry and large country gourmet kitchen with a wood-burning fireplace by the dining area. Step outside to a screened-in porch for summer entertaining or dining. To relax, slip behind pocket French doors to the media/study room. The second floor is home to the master bedroom with fireplace, deck overlooking the rear of the property and a luxurious bathroom with "his" and "hers" vanities. Two additional ensuite bedrooms and 2 bedrooms with a shared bath also occupy the second floor. For convenience, the laundry room is also located here. The lower level of the residence offers a very spacious and light-filled "playroom" or den with 10-foot ceilings. An additional room with full bath doubles as an exercise area. Finishing touches: 2-car detached garage connected by a covered portico, outdoor enclosed shower, in-ground irrigation system, professional landscaping, central air conditioning and central vacuum. This elegantly furnished residence is a short distance to the village and ocean beaches.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

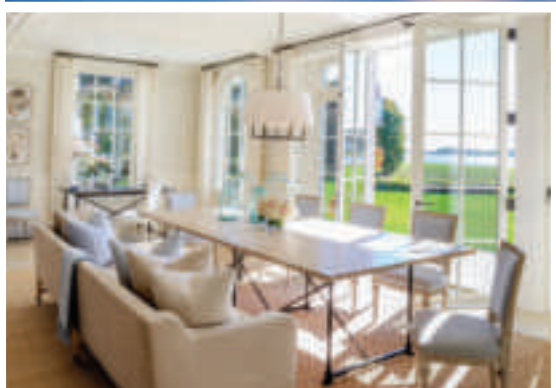


1320 FLYING POINT ROAD | WATER MILL | \$17,985,000

Walls of glass open to panoramic Mecox Bay and Atlantic Ocean views from this spectacular modern “beach house” offering direct access to miles of pristine coastline. This home was conceived and created by a pedigree team that included architect Fred Stelle and world-renowned designer Jacques Grange. No expense was spared in the process, and the finished product is simply stunning. Nearly 7,200 square feet of interior and exterior space become one as this home floats above the dune. The open floor plan captures the essence of seaside living. Online photos, video and floor plan offer further details.

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51 HALSEY LANE (VILLA MARIA) | WATER MILL | \$85,000,000

Built in the early 20th century at the height of America's Gilded Age, this grand, palatial, iconic waterfront estate, Villa Maria, is a private, gated compound overlooking Mecox Bay. It has been returned to its former turn-of-the-century splendor, with all the comforts and state-of-the-art technology that the 21st century has to offer. The five-year transformation of the historic landmark property was undertaken by two design firms well known for their work not only in the Hamptons but around the country and abroad as well. Andre Tchelistcheff and his talented team of architects and designers are responsible for the complete, top-to-bottom renovation of the residence, carriage house and gatehouse. Experts in the renovation and restoration of historic landmarks, John Hummel custom builders and their team of craftsmen worked hand in hand with the owners during this process. Finally, renowned landscape architect Edmund D. Hollander was brought in to restore the gardens and add layers of evergreen landscape for the ultimate in beauty and privacy. From its impressive grand-entrance foyer with a soaring triple-story spiraling staircase to its hand-honed limestone floors, imported Carrara marble baths and oversized formal rooms for entertaining on a grand scale, this magnificent 22,000-square-foot baronial mansion cannot be equaled or duplicated in the Hamptons today. Recently featured in *Architectural Digest* and offered on 15 waterfront acres (4 separate parcels), it is offered for the first time to the discriminating buyer.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.



20 DOWNS PATH | SOUTHAMPTON | \$9,750,000

Nestled on a glorious 1.7-acre slice of heaven, this 10,000-square-foot manse will be one of the finest newly constructed homes in the area when it's finished in the spring of 2016. The traditional gabled dwelling, designed by renowned architect Peter Cook, is given a modern edge with elements such as floor-to-ceiling windows with views of the swimming pool and splendid gardens. The two-story home features a first-floor junior master bedroom, 6 additional bedrooms and 9.5 bathrooms. The impressively finished basement will contain a media room, gym, wine cellar and staff quarters.

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816 MECOX ROAD | BRIDGEHAMPTON | \$13,450,000

Perfection in design, construction and execution is evident in this stunning new home set among the horse farms and apple orchards off Mecox Road near the Atlantic Ocean and Mecox Bay. Extraordinary custom features include double-height entry; great room with views of the horse farms and French doors leading to the bluestone terrace, the formal living room, dining room and library; covered loggia with outdoor fireplace; large master suite with adjoining sitting room with fireplace, 3 walk-in closets and a master bath with soaking tub and large seamless glass shower; 8 ensuite bedrooms; completely finished lower level with screening room and gym; and the attached garage has storage for 6 luxury cars. Many of the principle rooms enjoy the tranquil horse farm views, and you can also appreciate the scenery from the covered loggia or by the 20' X 50' swimming pool and spa.

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900 NORTH LAKE WAY | PALM BEACH | \$37,450,000

This stunning lakefront estate, remarkable for its extraordinary scale and expansive living areas, was created in 1986 by renowned architect Milton Klein and underwent a complete restoration in 2008. Offering a full 200 feet of scenic frontage on Palm Beach's elegant Lake Worth, the property enjoys the utmost privacy due to the unusual fact that there is no neighbor to the south. The superb contemporary architecture of this tri-level compound has been custom designed on its main and second levels with 7 bedrooms, 10 full baths and 6 half baths, both formal and informal living rooms, an elegant formal dining room and a magnificent wood-paneled library. The estate's lower level is home to a sophisticated theater/media room with seating for 12, a Zen-like spa with adjoining exercise room and a temperature-controlled, fully computerized wine cellar with capacity for 5,000 bottles of vintage champagne and fine imported wines.

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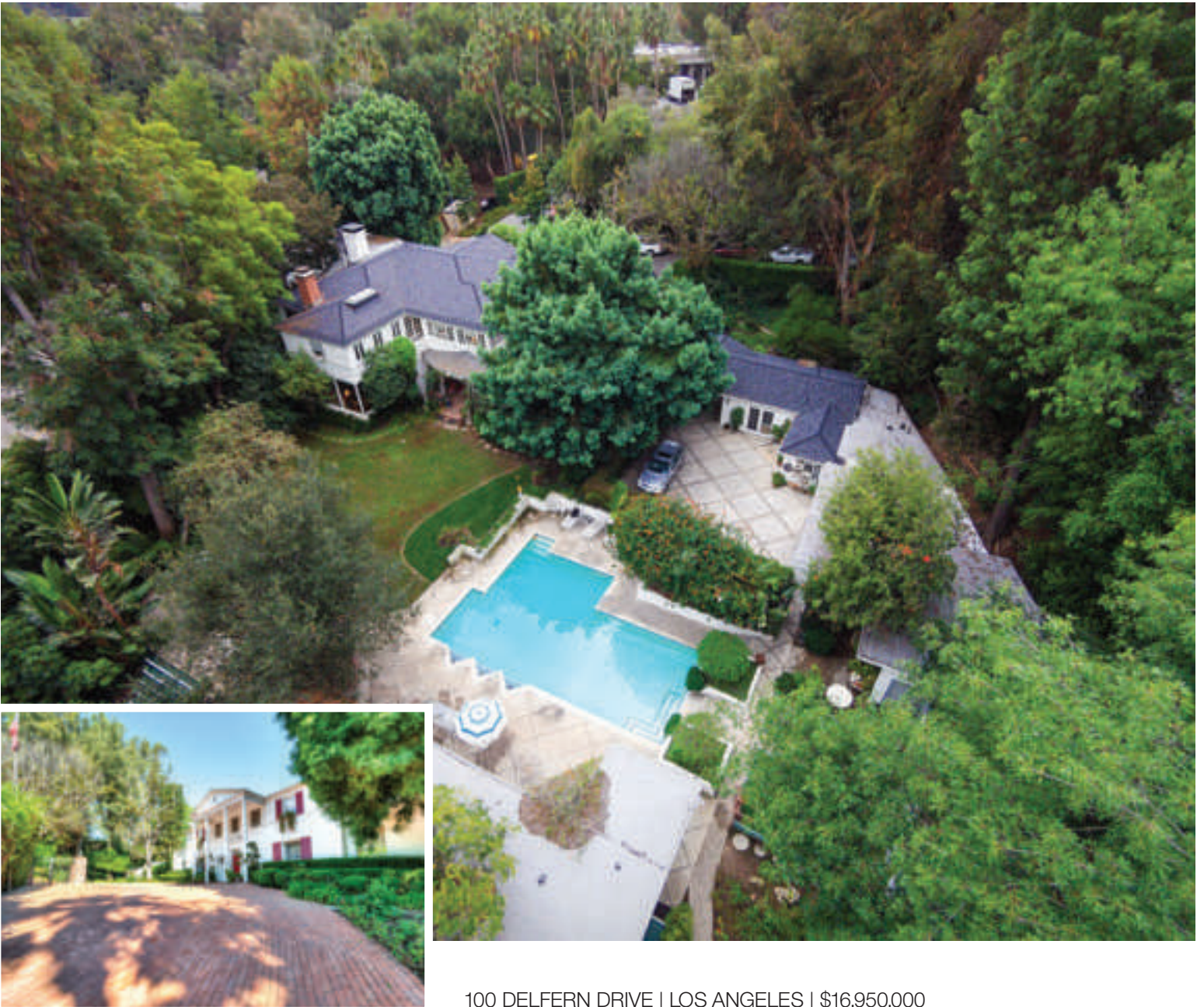


1021 NORTH OCEAN BOULEVARD | PALM BEACH | \$28,750,000

Tucked away down a private gated drive and totally renovated, this beautiful home is the perfect place to entertain your family and friends in true Palm Beach style! It's architecturally distinct, with glorious living spaces including a two-story sunlit living room with open beamed ceiling, exquisite formal dining room with coffered ceiling, pecky cypress library, gleaming gourmet kitchen and more. First-class design and detailing throughout characterize this unique direct-access ocean retreat featuring 6 bedrooms, 8.5 baths, a guest house and a swimming pool.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

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100 DELFERN DRIVE | LOS ANGELES | \$16,950,000

The Eva Gabor Estate. Only once in a lifetime does a property of this magnitude come to market. Comprising 1.102 acres of land in coveted Holmby Hills, the tennis court estate stretches from Delfern Drive to Baroda Drive. Enter through the doors of this 6,414-square-foot Paul Williams home and let your imagination run wild with the things you can do here! With the exception of three homes on Delfern, all of the great estates on this street have sold in the past 15 years. This is your chance to own one of the last homes of the Golden Age of Hollywood. Mia Farrow, Audrey Hepburn, Henry Berger, Anita Louise, David Niven and Frank Sinatra have all called this home. Now here is *your* chance.

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809 NIMES PLACE | LOS ANGELES | \$15,000,000

This Balinese-inspired resort estate is located through the prestigious East Gate in prime Bel Air. Situated on approximately 1.43 acres, the property sits behind gates with a long driveway that opens into a large motor court. The one-story home is on a promontory and offers panoramic city views. The public rooms are arranged in an open floor plan under a soaring ceiling and main pavilion. A spacious chef's eat-in kitchen and wine cellar are also featured. The master suite is a true retreat with seating area, fireplace and a magnificent oversized spa-like bathroom finished in sea grass and rich woodwork. Two additional bedrooms plus staff quarters complete the interiors. The private, lushly landscaped grounds feature a private pool, guest house and bath, meandering pathways, fountains and beautiful views of the city.

For more information on this property, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

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ON THE INSIDE OTI EXCLUSIVE SUMMER 2016 RENTALS



89 MURRAY LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$25,000–\$180,000
ONE WEEK OR ONE MONTH

This shingle-style Southampton residence with pond frontage is just moments from the ocean and has private ocean access. Two acres of privacy create a setting of country elegance for this newly renovated country/beach house. There are 6 bedrooms and 6.5 baths plus staff quarters, a fabulous new kitchen, great room, master bedroom, screened porch, heated pool with cabana and large brick terrace. And it's a short distance from a secluded Southampton beach.



408 FIRST NECK LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$295,000 | 14-DAY RENTAL

Drive through the gates and the allée of trees to this magnificent estate on Lake Agawam sited on 8.4 acres. It is available for the first time for your enjoyment after the completion of a 12-month rejuvenation and renovation. The main house offers breathtaking water views from the entry foyer as do all of the principle rooms, which were styled for today's living by renowned designer/decorator Tony Ingrao. Grand and gorgeous living areas with beautiful, modern finishes open to gardens, the lake and acres of lawn. Five ensuite bedrooms include the deluxe waterfront master bedroom and master bath featuring dual vanities, soaking tub and large shower. A separate staff wing with 2 bedrooms and bath is ideally located. The guest cottage is a home unto itself with a sitting room, kitchen, 2 bedrooms and baths. The expansive grounds include a pool house with bath and lounge/sitting room, waterfront swimming pool with massive terraces and outdoor living spaces. The new all-weather tennis court is located out of view and is convenient to other outdoor sporting areas. This is truly a beautiful and luxurious way to spend two weeks in Southampton.



840 MEADOW LANE | SOUTHAMPTON | \$100,000–\$575,000
ONE WEEK OR ONE MONTH

This incredible 1929 Tudor mansion is situated on more than 8 acres of desirable Meadow Lane oceanfront land with 600-plus feet of coveted pristine white sand frontage. The rambling "summer cottage" comprises 22,000 square feet of living space including formal living and dining rooms, library, poolside buffet room, eat-in kitchen with commercial range and large pantry, plus a second butler's kitchen, gym with sauna, numerous offices and two outrageously fun and whimsical Coney Island-inspired game rooms. Sleeping quarters consist of 7 oceanfront bedrooms plus 8 others including a staff wing with 4 bedrooms, 2 baths and a gathering room. When not lounging around the heated 60-foot Gunite pool and spa, play some tennis or just take in the unsurpassed ocean views. The property also contains a bayfront parcel for boat mooring and is convenient to the village center, heliport and airport.

For more information on these properties, please visit www.OTILuxury.com or contact jd@otiluxury.com.

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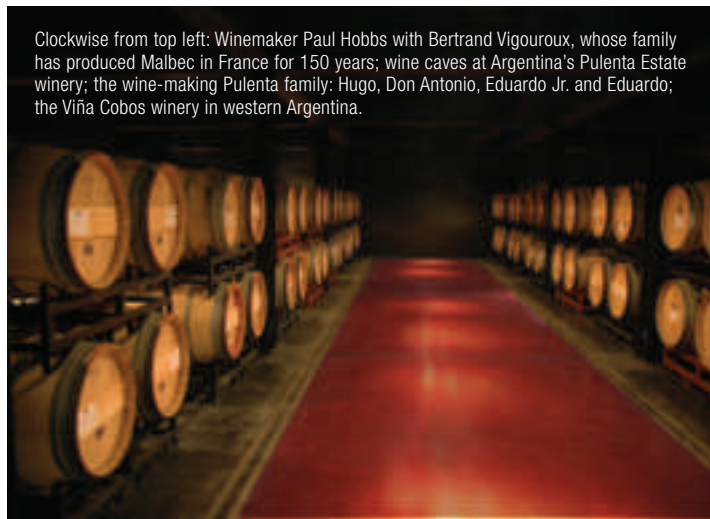
THIS ARGENTINE VARIETAL HAS REGAINED ITS REPUTATION FOR SUBTLETY AND BALANCE—
AND HARD TIMES ACTUALLY HELPED. BY JOSH SENS

Don't cry for Malbec, Argentina! The truth is, the wine for which that country is best known came through the economic crash of the late 1990s and early 2000s. It didn't just survive; it flourished.

Over time, the downturn had an unexpected upside, as runaway inflation corrected an imbalance in the market. In the sour climate, it no longer made sense to bottle low-end Malbecs because it was pretty much impossible to turn a profit on them. So vintners slashed production of their two-buck chuck—the subpar swill they'd been pumping out for



This label announces a subtle, widely suitable varietal—a far cry from the not-so-distinguished table wines that recently diluted the distinction of the Malbec name.



Clockwise from top left: Winemaker Paul Hobbs with Bertrand Vigouroux, whose family has produced Malbec in France for 150 years; wine caves at Argentina's Pulenta Estate winery; the wine-making Pulenta family: Hugo, Don Antonio, Eduardo Jr. and Eduardo; the Viña Cobos winery in western Argentina.

years, staining Malbec's image around the world.

"So much cheap stuff had been getting out there that it was hurting Malbec's reputation," says Paul Hobbs, a veteran winemaker and wine importer. "It was a serious problem. But the Argentine economy solved it for us."

As it happens, Hobbs lent a hand as well. A former winemaker for Robert Mondavi, Hobbs has roots in Malbec that run decades deep. He first turned his mind to it in the late 1980s, when he traveled to Argentina and was struck by the varietal's vast untapped potential. Though Malbec grew abundantly around Mendoza, the country's largest wine-making region, its quantity far outstripped its quality. Most Argentine Malbec wound up in inexpensive blends known as "criollas"—ho-hum table wines with not much to recommend them other than their bargain-basement price. Hobbs envisioned a different fate for Malbec, a noble French-born grape that he believed just needed to be treated with more dignity.

Using old-vine fruit grown by Nicolas Catena, one of Argentina's most respected vintners, Hobbs began a deep dive into Malbec, applying Old World practices to New World wine production. The result was Malbecs of unusual refinement, not the high-alcohol brutes that so many consumers had come to know.

In 1999, Hobbs co-founded Viña Cobos, a Mendoza winery, where he experimented with varied root stocks, planting the varietal on new sites that showcased Malbec's distinctive terroir. The wines he produced earned widespread accolades for their bright notes and balance. But in the world of Malbec they were the exception, not the rule.

Cheap Malbec still flooded the market, and in the

early aftermath of the crash it gushed out in even greater torrents. Much of it was over-oaked and over-extracted, with all the subtlety of a sledgehammer. Some of it was fraudulently labeled.

"It got so bad that there were 'Malbecs' on the market that didn't contain any actual Malbec," Hobbs says. "We used to joke that they were born with a birth certificate of Bonarda [a less nuanced grape varietal] but were traveling with a Malbec passport."

Meanwhile, Hobbs kept at it, and when the economic crash crushed the low end of the market, the Malbecs he had championed came to the fore. Hobbs has since been joined by a growing number of Malbec producers who are out to show the grape for all that it can be. Among them are wineries such as Riglos and Pulenta Estate, in the rolling folds of the Mendoza region, on terrain that inches toward the Andes foothills, where the climate and the soil give rise to complex fruit.

Like Hobbs, the vintners on these properties lean toward low-tech practices, a minimalist approach that lets the winning traits of the grape shine through. Their vintages demonstrate impressive range—some lean and supple, others round-bodied and robust. And contrary to Malbec's stubborn reputation as a varietal best suited to steakhouse fare, these wines are strikingly food-friendly, pairing beautifully with sirloin, sure, but also with pasta, seafood, curries and more.

"To a lot of people, it used to seem that Malbec had a serious problem," Hobbs says. "But the bigger problem was, we didn't really understand the grape."

TASTING NOTES

Cobos Malbec 2011 \$210

A dark, elegant wine that opens with hints of coffee and caramel, but plays out on the palate with bright berry and cherry notes.

Pulenta Estate Malbec 2011 \$29

The first impression: French oak and mulling spices. But those wintry notes make way for a springtime symphony of lavender and honeysuckle, followed by a clean plum-tinted finish.

Riglos Gran Malbec 2012 \$35

A juicy but balanced wine that never grows too jammy, it mingles floral flavors with a ripe minerality, and a just-right touch of tannins tickles the tongue.



ST. BARTS: A BEAUTY ON THE BEACH

LUXURY HAS A GALLIC ACCENT AT THE CHEVAL BLANC ST.-BARTH ISLE DE FRANCE. BY RITA GUARNA



From top: Should you tire of relaxing on the beach, a tranquil pool awaits at the Cheval Blanc St.-Barth Isle de France. Enjoy cocktails for two with a breathtaking view from this private ocean-facing perch.

If the Hotel St.-Barth Isle de France were a woman, you could say she married well.

French luxury brand LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) could have its choice of lovely “mademoiselles” when searching for a suitable match in North America, but the boutique hotel on Anse des Flamands, probably the prettiest beach on the island, won out and after a year-long engagement (read: renovation), it joined the exalted Cheval Blanc family. (Other family members include Courchevel in France and Randheli in the Maldives.)

Perhaps the best part of the union is that it appears that little has changed at the beloved hotel, now called the Cheval Blanc St.-Barth Isle de France. The staff—the hotel’s heart and soul—remains the same: affable, accommodating to a fault and decidedly French. The only difference is that now they don charming seersucker uniforms. Similar too are the guest quarters—40 suites, bungalows and villas, which feel less like hotel rooms than the bedrooms of a Provençal family. The whitewashed country furnishings have been upgraded with the brand’s signature taupe plus accents of the palest salmon-pink, which you’ll find on everything from beach towels to pillows to glassware. Thankfully, the popular daily fashion shows remain too. They feature resort wear from the hotel’s closet-sized boutique stuffed with everything from Pucci bikinis and stylish caftans to straw hats and jewelry. Don’t be surprised if the model, Roxane, looks familiar: When she’s not strolling the sandy catwalk, she’s taking your dinner order in a charmingly halting English.

Oh, yes, the food. As a French territory, St. Barts not surprisingly has a cuisine that reminds you of dining in the south of France. Chef Yann Vinsot oversees a pair of excellent eateries on this property: La Case de L’Isle, featuring sophisticated French-Caribbean plates (plus a 150-odd selection of wines and champagnes) and the more casual La Cabane de L’Isle, site of the fashion shows.

Only eight miles across, St. Barts (short for St. Barthélemy and sometimes spelled St. Barth) is a hilly (thanks to a number of volcanic peaks) speck popping out of the northeast Caribbean in the French West Indies. Discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493 (who named it for his brother Bartolomeo), the island was settled by the French and owned for a while by Sweden before returning to French control. It became chichi after the Rockefellers and Rothschilds fell for its charm in the mid-’50s.

With no direct flights, getting to St. Barts isn’t easy. Some folks fly to St. Maarten and take a short flight or ferry across. A more civilized crossing (read: easier) is flying to San Juan, then boarding a tiny puddle jumper. One of Tradewind Aviation’s multiple daily flights will do nicely. Its Pilatus PC-12s are comfortable and sturdy—important features as the eight-seater threads



between two jagged peaks before touching down on a teensy runway. (Flights from St. Thomas and Antigua are also available.)

While the atmosphere is relaxed, folks do dress to impress while shopping or dining in the capital city, Gustavia, with its yacht-lined harbor. (The island hosts one of the world's most thrilling yacht races, Les Voiles de St. Barth.) Luxury brands abound along with unique boutiques, often outposts of exclusive Parisian designers.

Prefer to test your sea legs with a more gentle cruise? Rent a catamaran with crew for a day-long or half-day tour. Our captain, Miguel of St. Barth Sailor, anchored in the bay near Colombier, where we swam to the beach (the only one of 16 beaches not easily accessible), after which we sipped champagne and nibbled on a gourmet lunch prepared by Cheval Blanc (lest we miss the restaurants' gastronomic delights too much).

Back on terra firma, we proceeded to Bonito, where fashionistas flock to enjoy a delicious Latin American menu alongside unrivaled views of the harbor from an open-air pavilion.

If your "cruise" doesn't offer enough of a respite, the spa back at Cheval Blanc will chase away any lingering stress. It offers signature Guerlain treatments. (It's the only Guerlain spa in the Caribbean.) Try the Solar Escape, a body massage combined with a facial, or let a beauty coach choose an indulgent experience for you.

Do you think you could enjoy an island with no casinos, no all-inclusives, no cruise ships in port? An island with no poverty, no crime, no beach vendors? With unfailingly polite people, awe-inspiring vistas, white sand (or shell or stone) beaches and top-notch cuisine?

I do.



Clockwise from top: a private pool, one of the many amenities of the tucked-away Garden Suites; modeling the statement-making fashions available at the tony boutique; snorkeling in the blue waters of the Caribbean right in the resort's backyard; the ultimate in luxury: a three-bedroom villa set on the white sand beach; salade niçoise, perfect for a light lunch.



the great atsby

GIN'S ONCE-HUMBLE SIDEKICK HAS DISCOVERED ITS SASS.

BY VIRGINIE BOONE

For years, vermouth has been thought of as that secondary ingredient you add—or don't add—to a martini, a signifier of how strong you like the taste of gin or vodka. But the grape-based spirit (really a fortified wine made by adding botanicals, herbs and sugar) is coming back into vogue as a libation of its own, one worth using in either classic cocktails or inventive new ones—or sipping alone.

"The influx of new vermouths into the market in the past year makes it almost hard to remember when vermouth was a laughingstock," says Adam Ford, a lawyer by trade and founder of the Brooklyn-based craft distiller Atsby Vermouth. But he does recall that in 2010, when he started working on a formula for his company's product, there were no craft vermouths in New York City.

"It wasn't possible to get a really good Manhattan, martini, negroni, Rob Roy or boulevardier," he says, "because the vermouths on the market were too sweet and not particularly interesting."

But the spirit, whose name comes from the French pronunciation of the German word "wormut" for wormwood, a frequent

With a foundation of chardonnay from Long Island's North Fork blended with apple brandy, herbs, spices and a touch of honey, Atsby's golden Amberthorn vermouth isn't auditioning for second fiddle.





Above, from left: Atsby founder Adam Ford sniffs a handful of sage before deeming it worthy to go into his vermouth. (The herb is also taste-tested.) Hand-crushed cinnamon and nutmeg, too, contribute to his liquor's distinctive taste, and an Atsby employee checks another ingredient, quassia, for foreign objects. Below: Atsby's caramel-colored Armadillo Cake, infused with orange peel and shiitake mushroom.

ingredient, actually has an honored history. It was originally used, in fact, as a medicinal treatment for maladies like intestinal worms, malaria and indigestion, according to Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist*.

Made from white wine, vermouth is fortified with brandy or eau-de-vie to boost the alcohol to anywhere from 14.5 to 22 percent by volume. Italian producer Antonio Benedetto Carpano is credited as the first to create, in 1786, an aromatized, fortified vermouth using a very high-quality base wine, muscat.

"His other stroke of genius," says Ford, "was to use numerous botanicals—reportedly more than 50—so that no one could identify the flavor of any one herb or spice, and then sweetening it just right to create a perfectly balanced drink that was intended to be drunk on its own." And that's exactly what vermouth was from the 1860s until World War II: an elegant and sophisticated drink.

But the war cut off America's supply of French and Italian vermouth, prompting stateside bartenders to use less and less of it in classic cocktails like the martini and Manhattan. (The original versions called for two parts vermouth to one part hard liquor.)

European producers responded to America's shifting ratios by using blander wines as their base and changing their formulas, producing a spirit that was no longer as enjoyable on its own. But fortunately, true vermouth didn't disappear entirely.

Ford, whose wife is Italian, became inspired to make vermouth after a trip to the Italian town of Courmayeur, where he had the chance to try local versions that blew his mind, so different were they from anything else he had ever tried.

"As it turns out I was actually in the birthplace of vermouth," he says. "And after researching it to the end of the world, I realized that when made properly, when crafted from locally sourced wine and brandy and flavored using the highest-quality botanicals, straight vermouth can be simply

the best-tasting beverage ever created."

Ford decided to use top-shelf vintage chardonnay as the base, with the highest-quality apple brandy from New York apples distilled by a craft New York distiller, and add the best botanicals from around the world, sweetening the spirit only with raw local honey and caramel spun from dark Indian Muscovado sugar.

"I wanted to restore vermouth to its prior and rightful place as the hottest drink on the market," says Ford, who spent months working with a sommelier to get the recipe just right. "I didn't want to just make some bland knockoff of the European products, which a lot of people suggested I do." The result? The golden Amberthorn, summery and fresh in flavor, and the exotic Armadillo Cake, redolent with unexpected ingredients like wild celery, shiitake and nigella.

Part of the spirit's resurgence is its ability to feel both classic and modern, especially as hip new artisan producers get into the space, many of whom combine a respect for centuries-old tradition with today's sense of inventive freedom. For example, Uncouth Vermouth, the creation of another Brooklyn-based producer, Bianca Miraglia, offers such flavors as Serrano Chile Lavender and Pear Ginger.

In California, several wineries have been dipping their feet into vermouth, including Vya, the brand made by Madera-based Quady Winery in both dry and sweet versions; Sutton Cellars in San Francisco, whose product (like Ford's) is wormwood-free; and Matthiasson, made by Napa Valley viticulturalist and winemaker Steve Matthiasson, a fan of obscure grape varieties who blends a wine made from Flora grapes with sour cherries, blood oranges and cardoons from his own backyard.

"I think vermouth's resurgence is a reflection of how American palates have evolved and become more sophisticated," Ford says. "We've moved away from simple, sweet flavors and embraced more bitter, unusual and interesting tastes."

TASTING NOTES

Atsby New York Vermouth

Amberthorn: Delicately aromatic, with citrus and floral notes and a hint of anise. Tart with a complex finish.

Armadillo Cake: Profoundly spicy, imbued with orange, nutmeg and clove. A suggestion of sweetness.

4 favorite hotels

HAVEN'T PLANNED YOUR LATEST GETAWAY YET? CHECK OUT THESE DELUXE PROPERTIES, ALL PERSONAL PICKS OF REALTOR JON DAVIS.

Whether traveling for business or pleasure, few things are as important as where you stay. What matters most? Location, luxury, unforgettable customer service and amenities like spas, fireplaces and fantastic food. Avid traveler Jon Davis reveals his favorite hotels and shares what makes each special.



Corinthia Hotel London

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London, UK
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corinthia.com

"The new hot sensational hotel in London is The Corinthia. The location is amazing; they have a beautiful setting. You've got the London Eye right across the street, and you can walk to Trafalgar Square. Outside there's a beautiful atrium with a big humidor, fireplace and cigars. It's the only place in London I'll ever stay."



Fontainebleau Miami Beach

4441 Collins Avenue
Miami Beach, FL
305.535.3283
fontainebleau.com

"The Fontainebleau has a lot of history. It was *the* place to go, 40 to 50 years ago. And it still is 'part of the scene' today. The bellman comes out to greet you, and when you walk in the door, it's electric. They have one of the best clubs in Miami, six or seven restaurants, a spa that's ridiculous and so many different pools. When you go there for business you can invite clients to the pool or to one of the restaurants and everybody has a great time. What's not to love?"



Montage Beverly Hills

225 North Canon Drive
Beverly Hills, CA
888.860.0788
montagehotels.com

"When I go to LA, it's usually for business, and I always stay at Montage. My business partner out there, Josh Flagg, has his office right across the street. Spago, Wolfgang Puck's restaurant, is also across the street. Rodeo Drive is two blocks away. And, most important, SoulCycle is just around the corner."



The Ritz-Carlton New York, Central Park

50 Central Park South
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ritzcarlton.com

"The Ritz is on this list because of my family's long history with the hotel. My dad has always stayed there, and as a kid I loved going to the second-floor lounge where they would have candy and cookies. Central Park is across the street, and we used to go on horse-drawn carriage rides. It's also close to Rockefeller Center and to Fifth Avenue—it's a great location. Of course, the service is fantastic. When my girlfriend was sick and I had to go on a business trip, they took care of her. That's how they treat you, like family."

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